

Amendments to the Claims

Per 37 CFR §1.173(b), the following includes the entire text of each claim being changed within this amendment paper and each claim being added by this amendment paper and, pursuant to 37 CFR §1.173(d), the changes are shown by brackets and underling relative to the original patent specification.

And per 37 CFR §1.173(c), Applicant is including an appendix "on pages separate from the pages containing the changes", which appendix shows the status of all patent claims and of all added claims, and an explanation of the support in the disclosure for the changes made to the claims within this amendment paper.

38. (Twice Amended) A method for feeding masa to a pair of aligned, opposed sheeter rollers, the sheeter rollers located adjacent to a masa hopper having an opening for receiving masa and a slot for dispensing masa, the masa hopper also having at least one shaft above the slot, each shaft having a projection, the method comprising the steps of:

placing the masa through the opening in the masa hopper;

feeding the masa to at least one shaft; and

forcing the masa through the slot, toward the sheeter rollers, with the projection on at least one shaft.

58. (new) A method for feeding masa to a pair of aligned, opposed sheeter rollers, the sheeter rollers located adjacent to a masa hopper for receiving masa and an opening at a bottom end of the hopper for dispensing masa, the masa hopper also having at least one shaft above the opening, each shaft having a projection, the method comprising the steps of:

- placing the masa into the masa hopper;
- feeding the masa to at least one shaft; and
- moving the masa out of the opening of the hopper, toward the sheeter rollers, with the projection on at least one shaft.

59. (New)The method for feeding masa as defined in Claim 58, wherein said feeding is accomplished by gravity.

60. (New)The method for feeding masa as defined in Claim 58, wherein said moving is accomplished by rotating the shaft with a motor.

61. (New)The method for feeding masa as defined in claim 58, wherein the masa hopper also has a pair of opposed, horizontally aligned, primary rollers between the opening and the sheeter rollers, the primary rollers each having a generally cylindrical surface and two ends, the method further comprising the steps of:

- rotating the primary rollers;
- drawing the masa between the primary rollers;
- compressing the masa into a generally uniform curtain; and
- feeding said uniform curtain into the sheeter rollers.

62. (New) The method for feeding masa defined in Claim 61, wherein there is a scraper for each primary roller, each scraper having a blade pivotally mounted and biased to longitudinally ride on the lower surface of its associated primary roller, the method further comprising the step of:

separating masa from the lower surface of each of the primary rollers.

63. (New) The method for feeding masa as defined in claim 61, wherein the masa hopper also has two endcaps, each endcap mounted around the ends of the primary rollers, the method further comprising the step of:

preventing movement of the masa past the ends of the primary rollers.